GREEN BUSINESS OPTIONS

Trainer's Manual
Acknowledgement

This training package has been adapted from an earlier version produced for the Green Business Options – entrepreneurship training programme organized in partnership with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China. The upgraded training package is completed by a task force of the International Labour Organization, consisting of:

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This manual is for trainers who will be teaching the revised Green Business Options Training Programme. In preparing this manual, we have assumed that the material will be delivered by trainers who are experienced in providing training and education to adults who are seeking new opportunities and ways to develop their ideas into new businesses.

This manual is not intended to provide prescriptive guidance on how to deliver the Green Business Options training but to give you some insight into the ideas and philosophy that went into the revisions. This will enable you to understand why the material is presented in this way and to tailor and develop the material to suit your own style. This will also enable you to make sure you are meeting the needs of the different groups of trainees that you will encounter.

You should also bear in mind that Green Business Options is not an environmental training programme. The information included about environmental issues is limited and selective. This programme is intended to help green entrepreneurs to identify business opportunities and information about environmental issues is included only to support this aim. There are many other resources to help the participants learn more about the various environmental issues mentioned here (and many others) and you will know of resources you can direct them towards. It will be helpful for the participants to learn as much as they can about the most pressing and important environmental issues as it will help them understand the context of what they are doing and also ensure that they do not, inadvertently cause an environmental impact of which they were unaware. You should be prepared to direct the participants to appropriate resources at relevant points in the programme.

This programme will not result in the participants immediately being able to start their own business and, even if they did, they would need information from the course to look back over in the future. You should encourage the participants to keep all the material relating to this programme in a portfolio of some type where the Training Manual, their notes and the results of their exercises can be retained for future use. This can become a useful resource for the participants as they continue their journey towards their new green business.
TRAINING -V- LEARNING

Training is a very commonly used word but learning is in many ways a better way to think of the subject. This is because learning ‘belongs’ to the learner, whereas training traditionally ‘belongs’ to the trainer or the organization delivering the training. In Green Business Options, we are helping the participants to ‘learn’ how to be green entrepreneurs. We cannot train them how to do this but we can provide them with some information, some inspiration and some tools to help them with their ideas and to identify opportunities. We are helping them to identify and achieve their own personal potential.

"Training" suggests a trainer-centered approach where information is provided to participants. However, "learning" centers on individuals taking ownership of their own development. If we achieve this, the participants will achieve their individual potential – what they love and enjoy, what they are most capable of, and strong at doing – rather than what we try to make them be. Training is about the organisation. Learning is about the person.

Training is often a required task as set by an institution or organisation (eg. a school). Learning is quite different. People respond to appropriate learning because:

- They want to;
- It benefits and interests them;
- It helps them to grow and to develop their natural abilities, to make a difference or to be special.

Learning describes a person growing whereas 'training' merely describes, and commonly represents, transfer of knowledge or skill for organisational gain. This, generally, has little to do with the trainee. If you consider the attributes of really effective people, the important qualities which make good performers special are likely to be attitudinal. Skills and knowledge, and the processes available to people, are no great advantage. What makes people effective and valuable to any organization is their attitude. It is the open-minded, Curious attitude we are trying to develop in the Green Business Options programme, to enable the participants to identify the right green business idea for themselves and to have the confidence and tools to pursue the goals of developing and establishing their business and, ultimately, making it succeed.
INSTRUCTOR-LED TRAINING

Instructor-led training is any kind of training that occurs in a training room. The Green Business Options programme is an instructor-led programme. It has two instructors and you present material to the group of participants through lectures, presentations, demonstrations, discussions and through them working through exercises for themselves. However, you should remember what we have just discussed above – you are helping the participants to learn, not training them!

Instructing a group allows you to deliver many training to many individuals for each hour of your time. Instructor-led training is particularly beneficial when the material is new or complex. This is probably the case for most of the participants on this programme and having an instructor on-hand to answer questions and demonstrate concepts can greatly enhance the participants’ learning experience.

ADVANTAGES

There are several benefits to using instructor-led training when compared with other types of training.

- Instructor-led training allows you to work with a larger group at once. This allows you to use a variety of techniques such as role-playing, exercises and games to enhance the learning experience.

- Teams may also learn better with instructor-led training as they can share ideas, work in groups and debate with their colleagues. You may find this type of training can help the group to bond and solve problems between them. The close relationship the participants will build up over the course of the programme may help them to provide support to each other after the programme is complete. This can lead to longer-term benefits than a one-on-one session or on-line training.

- Because the participants are in a controlled space for a fixed period of time, you have the opportunity to help them to learn without them being distracted by competing demands.
For middle-sized groups, instructor-led training can be less expensive than other types of training.

**DISADVANTAGES**

A disadvantage to instructor-led training, when you have several people to teach, is that it can be hard to provide personalized instruction. It can also be challenging to accommodate different learning styles. Additionally, slower learners may find it difficult to keep up with the pace of instruction whilst quicker learners may get bored, and may disengage. You will have to recognise the signs of both issues with your group of participants.

Provided you recognise the potential advantages and disadvantages of this type of delivery, you will be able to adapt your training methods and your approach to the different groups to meet their specific needs.
INTRODUCTION TO TOOLS FOR LEARNING AND BUSINESS

This section of the Trainer’s Manual outlines a range of activities, and some different approaches and ways of using material which may be useful in the Green Business Options programme. The activities can serve different purposes:

- Ideas for stimulating discussion and debate
- Ways of recording or organising ideas generated by group work and discussion
- To help students to analyse and clarify material from the programme.

Activities can be combined to develop a sequence of work in the programme. Variety and interest can be introduced by using a range of different approaches in a session or across the whole range of the programme.

BRAINSTORMING

This is a short and simple activity when individuals, pairs or groups spend some time recording as many responses to a question as possible. The key condition for brainstorming is that no responses should be questioned or challenged – participants are asked to keep an open mind and all ideas, are accepted and recorded. The emphasis here is on quantity rather than quality of response. After the brainstorming, the responses can be grouped, evaluated, allocated for further exploration or whatever seems appropriate.

Potential uses

Because there are no ‘right’ answers in brainstorming, the original question has to be carefully framed. It is a particularly useful technique to use in the initial stage of gathering information before any analysis is undertaken. It is used in this way on two occasions during this programme. The key to the activity is to understand what needs to be done with the information that has been generated.

If you are devising a session which includes a brainstorm, it is important that you decide why such a technique is useful and what will be done with the material that is generated. A task which selects some of the responses and discards others may make participants
feel that their contribution was ‘wrong’ and lessen their confidence, unless treated with sensitivity.

**DISCUSSION**

Any session or part of a session in which participants are involved (with or without a trainer) in discussing a relevant topic could be included here. The main characteristic of a discussion is that it should have clear learning objectives.

**Potential uses**

This is possibly one of the most used – or misused – techniques in small group work. Any topic, statement, evidence or question can be discussed and the discussion can be either very structured or allow for an exploration of various ideas. Whilst there may be times when a relatively free exploration of a topic is useful, most discussions should be purposeful, not least because of the time constraints on you in delivering this programme. Good discussions need to be planned and you should be able to direct the participants to address a sequence of points which are related to the intended learning objectives. At the end, you must draw together or summarise what has been covered and the conclusions reached, making the benefits of the exercise very clear to the participants but noting that different people will gain different insights from the discussion.

Discussions rarely work well in large groups unless the participants are familiar with each other and feel confident enough to contribute. Breaking down into smaller groups encourages more people to participate or you could leave this technique until later in the programme when the participants have gotten to know each other. Even at this stage, you may have to manage the discussion carefully to make sure that all the participants have the opportunity to contribute.

**ROLE PLAY**

The use of role play is a well known technique for active learning. Participants are allocated ‘roles’ in a case scenario and are asked to ‘act out’ an event or relationship.

**Potential uses**

The potential use of this technique depends on the subject matter and on your creativity
and skill. In a debate on a controversial topic, roles can be allocated which encourage the participants to think of the arguments appropriate to their role. If, for example, the group was considering the potential for starting an eco-tourism venture in a rural area, the roles would be:

- Proponent of the planned eco-tourism business
- Representative of the local authority
- Representative of the local village (who may be in favour of the idea because of job-creation or against because of the influx of tourists)
- Representative of a local environmental group
- An eco-tourist.

The debate can be intellectual but it can also be emotional, especially if an emotive issue is being discussed. The role play should be followed by a period of debriefing when the ‘performance’ is analysed and the main arguments are discussed.

We have included one role play exercise in the programme where two participants will act out an interview between a would-be entrepreneur and a key information provider. This is in chapter 6 of the Green Business Options Training Manual. Putting a role play exercise late in the programme should allow the participants to get to know each other before putting two of them in this interactive situation. In addition, by this time, the would-be entrepreneur will have a well-developed business idea to put to the key information provider.

**STRUCTURAL BRAINSTORMING**

Structural brainstorming is similar to a brainstorming exercise but is focused around a particular product or issue and is designed to elicit specific information. Rather than a blank piece of paper to record responses, participants are asked to record their responses in a more structured way – an example is included within Chapter 5 of the Green Business Options training manual. The same conditions apply to structural brainstorming – no responses should be questioned or challenged. Structural brainstorming can be undertaken by individuals or in groups.
Potential uses

Structural brainstorming can be used where more specific information is required than would be obtained from a straightforward brainstorming session. In this programme, it is used to prompt participants to identify potential business opportunities that may exist around a particular product or technology and four sets of information are sought. This can be found in chapter 5 of the Training Manual.

MIND MAPS

Mind mapping is a form of brainstorming but it seeks to record information in a more holistic way than in a brainstorm. The Mind Map helps to make connections and links between ideas. The outcome of a brainstorm will be a list of words or topics that you then have to make some sense of. The outcome of a mind mapping exercise is a diagram that provides links from the central idea or question that has been posed.

Mind mapping can be a difficult technique to learn. We are often taught to think in a linear way in that we follow a narrative from beginning to end; or we make lists; or record notes down a page. Mind mapping encourages us to think more laterally and to record the information in this way too, leading to a very visual representation of the issue being considered. The advantage is that the mind mapper can make links and pull ideas together without breaking the flow of thought.

Mind mapping can be undertaken with a large sheet of paper and a selection of coloured pencils or pens or if you have access to a computer, mind mapping software is available from a number of sources.

Potential uses

Mind maps can be useful when the purpose is to come up with as many linked ideas around a central topic or theme as possible. For example, if considering whether to move the centre of operations for a business, the decision maker could mind map the implications on staff, company finances, logistics, appearance, outward perception, location and any other issue that could be identified. With an effective mind map, most, if not all of the implications of the potential course of action could be identified and links made between them on a single sheet of paper.

In this programme, the participants are encouraged to mind map potential business ideas. There is no specific exercise for them to generate a mind map but an example is
SURVEYS

Surveys are used extensively by businesses and other organisations. To develop a business survey you need to:

- Establish the goals of the project – what you want to learn, why you want to learn it and how you will use the information when you have it
- Determine the sample – who will you survey and how many surveys do you need to undertake
- Choose the methodology - will you use a face to face interview, telephone survey, paper questionnaire, on-line questionnaire
- Create the questionnaire
- Pretest the questionnaire if possible
- Issue the survey or conduct the interviews – gather the data
- Analyse the data and produce reports.

Correctly determining the target population is critical. If you do not interview the right kinds of people, you will not successfully meet your goals. A small representative sample will reflect the group from which it is drawn. The larger the sample, the more closely it reflects the target group. Those undertaking a survey will need to make a decision about the sample size based on factors such as time available, budget and degree of precision required.

Your choice of survey method will depend on several factors including:

- Speed – email and web-based surveys are the quickest methods, followed by telephone interviews. Mail surveys are the slowest.
- Cost – it is expensive to undertake personal interviews. Email and web-based surveys are the least expensive for large samples.
- Internet usage – whilst web-based and email surveys offer significant advantages, the results may not be representative of a population as a whole as they exclude those with no internet access.

Designing questionnaires is quite complex and inadequate attention to the way questions are structured may lead to bias in the responses. Before relying too much on surveys to provide information, you should spend some time learning how to develop
them, avoid bias and make sure the responses are representative of the population you are surveying. When helping the participants in the programme to learn about information gathering, reference to surveying is important and you can highlight some of the issues and potential difficulties to them.

**Potential uses**

There are many potential uses for surveys in the business context. They can be used to find out information about employees, customers, suppliers and can measure, for example, satisfaction, reaction to new product ideas or opinions on current issues. In the context of this programme, they are used, to identify businesses in a geographical area, evaluate the participants' own attitudes, skills and behaviours and to gather information about the market in which the businesses will operate.

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**SWOT ANALYSIS**

SWOT Analysis is a useful technique for understanding your Strengths and Weaknesses, and for identifying both the Opportunities open to you and the Threats you face (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – SWOT). Used in a business context, a SWOT Analysis can help you to find a sustainable niche in your market that can maximise your chances of business success. Used in a personal context, it can help you develop your career in a way that takes best advantage of your talents, abilities and opportunities.

**Potential uses**

What makes a SWOT Analysis particularly powerful is that, with a little thought, it can help to uncover opportunities in the market for an effective business model. In addition, by understanding the weaknesses of the business, you can manage and minimise threats. More than this, by looking at yourself and your competitors using the SWOT framework, you can start to craft a strategy that helps you distinguish yourself from your competitors, so that you can compete successfully in your market. It is often used as part of business planning both in the early stages of business development but also when a business is re-examining its overall strategy.

In the context of this programme, the SWOT Analysis is used towards the end when the participants are analysing their business ideas.
CASE STUDY

In an attempt to make the programme ‘real’, and less of an academic exercise, we have integrated a fictional case study into the programme. The case study material should be used by the participants to help them understand what is required at the various stages of the programme and to provide another source of stimulus to help them think of ideas and opportunities.

The case study follows three people who met on one of the Green Business Options training programmes. They did not know each other at the start of the programme but they worked together during the sessions and got to know each other quite well by the end of the programme. A thumbnail description of the participants in the case study is included in the training manual. You can enhance and embellish the descriptions if you wish, to make the case study seem more realistic. However, you will need to be consistent with the programme when considering the case study material.

The case study follows the three participants as they progress through the programme. This is done by providing the feedback from the exercises they undertake as they progress through the programme.

It is your choice about how you use the case study material. However, some of the exercises in the programme are impractical to carry out whilst in the training room so you could use the information from the case study to help the participants understand what is required from the exercise and how they should go about it. The results of these exercises in the case study can then be used to begin debate and discussion about the outcome of the exercise in the absence of material from the real exercises undertaken by the participants.

The case study material is also designed to provide practical examples of the outcomes required for each of the exercises. Where you are discussing real outcomes with participants instead of case studies, you should discourage reading the case study materials until after they have completed the exercises. If not, there is a danger that the participants will try to take short cuts and copy the material from the case study. This does not help them to learn for themselves. It is much better for the participants to develop their own ideas and then to read the case study material which may help to stimulate additional ideas.
VIDEO MATERIAL

You have been provided with access to five short video clips of green businesses as part of the Green Business Options training programme. They are as follows:

1. Shengchang – Biomass energy production
2. ZhongNeng – Steam recovery
3. TianZhong – Product reuse and remanufacturing
4. KingBo – Organic pesticide production
5. DuoOu – Clean tech paper production

These videos can be used at any time during the programme when they can be used effectively to illustrate a specific point and you can select the most appropriate delivery points for your style of delivery. From our knowledge of the programme, we suggest that you consider using them at the following points:

Shengchang
This video could be used to illustrate either distributed renewable energy or recycling and waste management or you could use the material to illustrate both potential opportunities together. Whilst managing agricultural waste in a sustainable way, this business is also helping people to generate energy from renewable resources. This is relevant when considering green business opportunities in chapter 2 of the manual.

ZhongNeng
In chapter 2 there is also a discussion about energy efficiency. This video could be used here to supplement the discussion.

TianZhong
This video clip adds some context to the case study about Ecostar photocopier remanufacturing and could be used with the case study or with Exercise 2 when the participants are asked to respond to some questions posed as a result of the case study. Both the case study and video material could also be used effectively whilst studying chapter 5 and the participants are generating their own green business ideas.
Introduction

**KingBo**

The production of organic pesticides is closely linked to the discussion about eco-agriculture and organic farming in chapter 2 of the training manual.

**DuoOu**

Paper production is a conventional business but DuoOu has developed new technology that allows them to make paper with far fewer liquid and gaseous wastes. This video would fit well with the discussion about ‘green’ versions of conventional businesses. This is again part of chapter 2 of the manual.

Alternatively, the videos could be used at any time in the programme when the participants need a break from lectures and paper based exercises. The information in the videos can be used to stimulate discussion about the opportunities for green businesses and the value to China in pursuing these options. The material may also promote additional ideas for the participants to pursue.
INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING – ATTITUDE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Most the participants will be attending the Green Business Options programme voluntarily – they will be there to learn, not to be ‘taught’. However, it is often appropriate to make sure all the participants recognise at the outset what is expected of them and how they should behave towards you and their colleagues in the programme. To achieve this, you could consider including the following letter or something similar (you should personalise it, making sure it meets your needs as the trainer) in your introduction to the session.

Introduction - Please help to make this programme positive and helpful for all participants.

Whilst every effort has been made to design this programme to meet the needs of all those participating, it is inevitable that each of you will have slightly (and in some cases significantly) different past experiences, levels of ability and knowledge, personal skills and styles, and needs and expectations. Therefore during this programme, some of the learning might already be known or familiar to you.

Please bear in mind that this will not be the case for all of those taking part. We are all different. As such we would greatly appreciate your cooperation, tolerance and awareness as to the needs of the other participants on this programme.

If you find yourself thinking that you have ‘heard it all before’ please take a few moments to think:

Have you really ‘heard it all before’, or are you overlaying your own experiences onto some new ideas? This is not an unusual reaction among very capable people when confronting new ideas, so first it is good to test your initial reaction because it would be a pity to miss out on this opportunity.

If you are convinced that the training is covering an area that you know well please consider how to make the best of this situation. If you know the area well, look for opportunities to make constructive suggestions and to provide helpful examples to the group. The trainers have a difficult job and will generally appreciate constructive help and participation from senior or experienced members of the group.

If you find yourself completing exercises much quicker than your fellow participants, look to help others, especially if you can see that other members of the group are
struggling. If you find yourself knowing the answers to many of the questions that arise during the programme, consider if less experienced delegates will benefit from working out the answers for themselves, with some prompting and guidance from you if helpful. Nobody ever learned much from answering an easy question, but we learn a lot from helping someone else who finds a question difficult. Delegates who help the group as well as learn new things for themselves, invariably get the most from training courses.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and contribution towards making this a helpful session for everyone.

**EVALUATION**

To enable the Green Business Options training programme to develop and to continue to deliver appropriate information to the participants, it is important to obtain their feedback on the quality of the material and the method and style of delivery. It is also very important for you as a trainer on the Green Business Options programme to continually evaluate your own performance and a good opportunity to obtain information is to ask the participants to evaluate your performance at the end of each programme. Appropriate evaluation can help you to improve your practice. This is achieved by asking all the participants, on completion of the programme if the material is relevant in their efforts to establish their green business and if it has been delivered to them in an appropriate and effective manner.

Each section of the Green Business Options Training Manual has a set of learning outcomes and there are overall outcomes for the programme as a whole. It is important to make sure that at the end of each section you have achieved these outcomes and at the end of the programme, you have achieved the overarching outcomes. This can be done by checking with the participants to make sure that the outcomes have been attained but this must be done in an objective manner.

If your training organisation does not have standard forms for evaluating the effectiveness of the training, you should devise your own for use with each programme you deliver. If there are consistent issues with the delivery, you need to review your own practice and make changes as appropriate. If there are issues in relation to the material you are delivering, you need to make your own organisation aware and to make sure that the information is provided to the ILO who is responsible for the training material.
**GUIDE FOR TRAINERS**

It is very difficult to give an exact timetable for this programme as it may be necessary to focus more thoroughly on some aspects with one group of participants when compared to another. It is suggested that the following broad timetable should be adopted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.30 – 10.00</td>
<td>Introductions by participants and trainer</td>
<td>‘Green versions of conventional businesses through to end of Chapter 2</td>
<td>Chapter 4 – Self evaluation case study and review to end of chapter</td>
<td>Chapter 6 to identifying key information providers &amp; role play exercise (19)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30 – 12.00</td>
<td>Exercise 1 Environmental Challenges – Climate Change</td>
<td>What is a green business?</td>
<td>Chapter 5 up to Life cycle analysis exercise</td>
<td>To end of Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Challenges – Desertification to Environmental Policy in China</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.00 – 15.30</td>
<td>Environmental Challenges – Desertification to Environmental Policy in China</td>
<td>Develop your green business ideas and exercises 4 and 5</td>
<td>Chapter 5 from Life cycle analysis exercise to Commodities Fairs and Business Exhibitions</td>
<td>Chapter 7 in full, Evaluation and Close</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.00 – 17.30</td>
<td>Finding Green Business Opportunities – The Resource Books</td>
<td>Chapter 4 through to self-evaluation exercise</td>
<td>Chapter 5 – exercise 14 to end</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Review of day 1</td>
<td>Review of day 1 and completion of self evaluation if necessary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review of day 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus, the programme is slightly less than 4 days in total. Clearly, if the time devoted to training is extended each day, the length of the programme may be shortened but it is likely that both participants and trainers will find it difficult to maintain an appropriate level of enthusiasm for more than 6 training hours in a day.

ICEBREAKER

Before embarking on the main part of this programme, it is important that you help the participants to feel at ease in the sessions and to begin the process of getting to know each other. This is generally done by using an ‘icebreaker’ exercise that acts as way of introducing you to the participants, the participants to you and the participants to each other. In doing so, it can often be helpful to find an exercise that highlights some of the participants’ interests or attributes or, if possible, their learning styles. This will allow you to begin to understand how to work with them over the duration of the programme. There are many icebreaker exercises available to trainers and most experienced trainers will have exercises they are familiar with and which they know will work.

If you are not familiar with icebreakers or need help to identify new resources, you could ask other trainers what they use or if you have access to the Internet, you can find many examples on line.

When ‘breaking the ice’ it is important that you find a way of including yourself in the exercise – either by going first in the introductions or participating in the exercise itself – so that the participants in the programme begin to get to know you, how you work and what interests and excites you. It is also helpful to provide some indication of your history and experience and why you are qualified to deliver the programme.

In preparing to deliver this programme, therefore, you need to identify an icebreaker exercise you can use and which will enable you to find the information you need.

It is also important that you find a way of ensuring you know the participants in the course and that they are able to get to know each other. This can be done using name badges but these are not easy to see when you have twenty or more participants in the room. Again, experienced trainers will have their methods for achieving this but you should ensure you have the materials available that you require.
The rest of this trainers manual goes through the requirements for each of the seven chapters of the Green Business Options Training Manual, highlighting the learning outcomes for each and particularly, providing guidance for you about the exercises.

The exercises are important parts of the training programme as the participants will learn more about themselves and the potential options for their businesses if they are working on the material directly rather than having someone (you) tell them what they should or should not do. You should, therefore, encourage the participants to approach the exercises with an open mind and to participate in the discussions with their colleagues and in the group as a whole. Active participation will lead to much better learning outcomes.

You should also bear in mind that the Green Business Options Training Manual has been written as a guidance and to provide a framework for the programme. You will be closely involved with your group for several days as you help them develop their green business ideas. It is important, therefore, that you use the material in the most appropriate way for you and the group. You should focus on the overall framework of the programme and keep in mind the learning outcomes but within this framework, you are encouraged to adapt and develop the training to meet the needs of the participants.

You should also be aware that the people behind the Green Business Options programme are constantly striving to ensure it is up to date and relevant and if you come up with any good ideas that you have used in the programme that may be helpful to other trainers and participants, you should share them. Equally, if you have any ideas about how the programme can be enhanced, you should be prepared to share these ideas too.

You should now go on to read the guidance for each chapter of the programme.
Learning Outcomes for Chapter 1

When you have finished studying chapter 1 of this training manual you will:

- Have a basic understanding of the causes and consequences of the environmental issues facing China and the rest of the world
- Understand the seriousness of the threat of climate change
- Have knowledge of some potential solutions.

Chapter 1 of the Green Business Options training manual is about environmental issues and impacts and is intended to provide background information to the participants on the major issues that are faced in China and the world. It is important for this part of the programme that you are aware of these issues and their likely effects so that you can respond to any questions and observations made by the participants. You should remember, however, that this is not an environmental studies course. Whilst the environmental issues and their solution is central to the development of new, green businesses, this programme is designed to help identify business opportunities, not provide comprehensive information about the environmental issues themselves.

EXERCISE 1: BRAINSTORMING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

This is an exercise for the whole of the group, working together. Participants are asked to brainstorm to identify the major environmental issues that face China and the rest of the world. For each issue, they are asked to try to identify:

- Who should be taking action
- What action they should take.

The exercise is intended to help the group work together to begin to identify some of
the environmental issues that we currently face and try and identify some solutions. You will need some large sheets of paper to enable you to write down all the ideas that the participants come up with and some means of sticking the paper to the wall.

We suggest that the time allocated for this exercise should be around 25 minutes, divided as follows:

- 10 minutes should be spent identifying the environmental issues
- 5 minutes should be spent considering who should be taking action and
- the final 10 minutes should be devoted to thinking about the actions that can be taken to ameliorate and reduce the impact of the issues.

You can, however, be flexible around these timings within the overall context of completing the whole training programme on time. Your role, as the facilitator for the session, will be to make it clear to the participants that they should suspend judgement on any of the ideas that are put forward. This means that you should not allow discussion on the ideas that the participants identify, merely record the information. In this way, the participants may begin to think creatively about ideas that otherwise would not have come to mind. It also sets the scene for the rest of the training session if you prevent the more active participants in the group from dominating the exercise.

You will also need to have sufficient knowledge of the topic to be able to prompt the participants if they begin to run out of ideas.

At the end of this exercise, we suggest that you leave all the notes on the wall of the training room as they may help to stimulate other ideas later in the session. When the participants have completed this exercise, the case study material, following three fictional participants in the programme can be used to examine the responses from others.
CHAPTER 2
GREEN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 2

When you have finished studying chapter 2 of this training manual you will:

- Identify the different sectors in which a business could be started
- Identify a number of opportunities for starting a green business
- Understand the multiple benefits that can be derived from green business opportunities.

It is hoped that the discussions about environmental issues in Chapter 1 will begin to stimulate the participants to start thinking about their own business ideas. If they are aware of the issues, they can begin to consider ways of overcoming them. This chapter is intended to help with this process.

For the purposes of this section of the programme, it will be important for trainers to have sufficient information about the different green business sectors that are covered here and others in addition. You will need to be able to talk authoritatively about the sectors and the opportunities that they present to the aspiring green entrepreneurs.

You can use one or more of the short video clips provided to stimulate ideas at this point if appropriate.

EXERCISE 2 – ECOSTAR CASE STUDY

This exercise is a short set of questions generated by the case study reading on the Ecostar copier re-manufacture (Appendix 11 of the training manual). It can be used as an individual exercise, for small groups of participants to discuss the issues or as a more general discussion involving a whole group. The most effective use may be to use small groups to debate and discuss the responses before opening up to the plenary for a debate on the different ideas that each small group took from the reading. We suggest you allow the participants 10 to 15 minutes to read the material and respond to the questions before a further 10 minute discussion in plenary.

Reading about a real business opportunity at this early stage of the programme may help
some of the participants to realise that the ideas that will be discussed and debated can translate into real and very successful businesses.

EXERCISE 3 – GREEN BUSINESS IDEAS

This is a personal exercise for each participant on the course and is on-going. The participants each develop their own list of potential business opportunities, stimulated by the information provided to them and the discussions they have as a group. At this stage, some of the participants may find it quite difficult to come up with any ideas while other may have multiple ideas and want direction to channel their enthusiasm and learn more about specific areas. It is important that you deal with all the different levels of engagement, providing support and help where necessary. You may be able to enlist the help of some of the more advanced participants to work with those who are struggling to come up with ideas and so begin to develop networks and encourage collaborative learning.

Participants should keep the lists they begin in this exercise and add to them over the course of the programme as other discussions stimulate further ideas. You should encourage the participants to begin putting together their portfolio of information that they will take away with them and that will help them as they plan their business.
CHAPTER 3
WHAT IS A GREEN BUSINESS IDEA?

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 3

When you have finished studying chapter 3 of this Training Manual, you will:

- Know what an enterprise is
- Have an understanding of different types of business
- Understand the difference between a business selling a product and one selling a service
- Be able to identify the features of ‘green’ industry
- Be thinking about your business as part of the green economy which leads to the creation of green jobs.

The first two parts of this programme have been about identifying environmental issues and some of the responses to them which have led to green business ideas. We now move on to look in more detail at the different types of business. However, you should not lose sight of the fact that we are still training potential green entrepreneurs so where you use examples and case studies to illustrate your teaching, you should try and use examples from the environmental business sector.

EXERCISE 4 – BUILDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT

This exercise comes towards the end of Chapter 3 of the training manual and is intended to test the participants’ comprehension of Appendix 6 of the main training manual. Participants should be instructed to read the material and answer the questions posed in the exercise. We suggest that you should allow 15 to 20 minutes for the participants to complete this exercise but be aware of the level of engagement and if it is clear that the majority of participants have completed the exercise sooner, then seek their feedback.

You may find it helpful to ask participants to work in pairs to answer the questions and if you can pair stronger participants with weaker ones, it may help with collaborative learning. Be careful to make sure, however, that the stronger and more knowledgeable participants do not get bored with their weaker colleagues so do not use the same pairs.
for more than two exercises throughout the programme.

When the participants have completed the exercise, you will need to obtain feedback from the group, making notes of the responses and ensuring that all the participants have the opportunity to record the responses if they wish to. Again, large sheets of paper or a black or white-board may be helpful to record the responses.

The integrated case study may provide you with some ideas for this session and will also be studied by the participants on completion of the exercise.

**EXERCISE 5 – MORE GREEN BUSINESS IDEAS**

This is a continuation of the exercise started at the close of Chapter 2 when the participants began to compile their own list of potential green business opportunities. You should allow the participants some time at the end of this section of the programme to add to their list.
CHAPTER 4
ARE YOU READY TO START UP A BUSINESS?

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 4

- When you have finished studying chapter 4 of this Training Book, you will:
- Be able to identify the key elements required to start a new business
- Understand where you need to strengthen your skills and abilities to help you start your business
- Have a clearer idea of the type of business that will work for you.

At this point the participants will begin to look at whether they have the correct skills and experience to become green entrepreneurs. This could be an emotional and challenging part of the course as some participants begin to recognise that they have the ideas and the drive to achieve their goals whereas others will begin to realise that they need to build more skills if they are to become leaders of successful green businesses. You will have to be prepared to help some of the participants through some difficult self-awareness whilst also providing sufficient mentoring to those who have more defined goals.

The chapter provides information about the key attributes that are desirable for the green entrepreneur. These attributes are then tested in the detailed self-evaluation questionnaire that comprises Exercise 6.

EXERCISE 6 – SELF EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

If participants are to respond effectively to this questionnaire, they need to be given the time and space to answer the questions honestly. We suggest, therefore, that you allow at least one hour for this part of the programme, including some time for you to work with participants who may find the questions difficult and to provide some support to those who find the answers and the outcome is not as they anticipated. You will need to be able to find other activities (reading material and research) for those who are able to complete the questionnaire quickly and without your input.
You should make the participants aware that this is a personal exercise that is all about them. They should not feel under any pressure to reveal the outcome of the exercise to other participants and you should make sure that other participants do not put undue pressure on the less confident members of the group to reveal the outcomes. However, if they choose to do so, that is acceptable.

You may find you need to provide some help with the scoring and interpretation of the outcomes. You should make it clear that a high score in column B does not preclude the participants from becoming a green entrepreneur, it just means there are some attributes they need to strengthen and develop before they are ready for this step. Alternatively, they may consider finding a business partner with complementary skills and experience to work with them in starting their business. The case study material may be helpful here as Ms C is in exactly this position after completing the questionnaire but does not let it put her off her ambition of starting a green business.

This moves the individual participants on to Exercise 7, where they are asked to identify ways of turning their weaknesses into strengths.

**EXERCISE 7 – TURNING WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS**

This is, again, an individual exercise and is a direct development from the responses given in exercise 6. Participants should be encouraged to find constructive ways to overcome any of the weaknesses identified in the self evaluation exercise and commit to taking the necessary action. Again, there is no need to share the outcomes of this exercise. We suggest you should not allow participants more than 10 minutes to respond to this exercise but they should be encouraged to refer back and to add other ideas as they think of them. Any actions they can take to overcome perceived or identified weaknesses in their skills and experience will be beneficial as they move towards starting their business.

**EXERCISE 8 – IDENTIFYING YOUR STRENGTHS**

This exercise is the opposite of the previous one. This is again an individual exercise but we suggest the results can be shared in a group session when everyone has completed the exercise individually. We suggest participants should be allowed 3 to 5 minutes for
each of the four sections of this exercise but they should be encouraged to complete the whole exercise, not just part of it. Some participants may find this difficult to complete as they will not be able to think of how their hobbies may help them in a business or they may not think they have many contacts who could be helpful. You can facilitate this session by giving guidance and examples of the types of skills, experience and contacts that might be helpful and may be able to contribute to the green business idea.

The idea of sharing the results at the end of the individual session is that the suggestions made by others may stimulate further ideas with the participants that they had not thought of when considering it on their own. Again, you should make notes on large sheets of paper and allow participants the opportunity to copy the notes to their portfolio.

When taking feedback from the participants about this exercise, you should stress the importance of the final category – the business network. If participants do not have a strong network, you should work with them to identify ways to strengthen their network and to maintain contact with other business people who may be able to help (and who they may be able to help in return in the future) as their business ideas develop and mature. They should be encouraged to begin with their colleagues on the programme – to consider them as the start of their professional network and maintain contact after the programme is completed.

The remainder of the chapter deals with different categorisations of business – by business type rather than industry sector as used in Chapter 3. You should be comfortable with this type of categorisation when delivering this part of the programme and then, towards the end of the chapter, help the participants into exercise 9.

**EXERCISE 9 – WHAT BUSINESS TYPE**

This exercise builds on the work done in the latter part of the chapter on different business types and asks the participants to identify the type of business they think they may like to start and the reasons for the choice. Again, this is an individual exercise but participants should be encouraged to share their ideas in feedback to the group overall.

This is a relatively short exercise and should not take more than 10 minutes plus feedback
to you and the group and any ensuing discussion.

At this stage, you should make it clear to the participants that the choices they make whilst they are on the course are not necessarily the ones they have to stay with – they are allowed to change their minds as new information and ideas come to hand. They should be encouraged to continually test and analyse their choices to make sure their reasoning is sound and they are reaching the correct decision for them and their situation.

You should also remind the participants that if this work has led them to think of any additional ideas for green businesses, they should include them in the list they began when working on chapter 2 of the programme.
CHAPTER 5
GENERATE YOUR GREEN BUSINESS IDEA

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 5

When you have finished studying chapter 5 of this Training Manual, you will:

- Be able to use brainstorming, structural brainstorming and Mind Maps to resolve business problems
- Understand how life-cycle analysis can help you identify business opportunities
- Understand how to undertake basic market research to help you develop your green business idea.

This chapter of the training manual is about the participants refining their business ideas before undertaking the early stages of their market research to test out their ideas with customers, suppliers and other interested parties. The first part of the chapter is about using tools to generate new ideas for green businesses and then to refine and clarify the ideas. Market research will then enable the participants to test their ideas and decide which of the many ideas they have identified will actually be valuable in the market place.

EXERCISE 10 – PERSONAL BRAINSTORMING

The instructions for this exercise in the manual are clear and explicit. This is an individual exercise again and we suggest that participants should be given at least 30 minutes to begin to generate their business ideas. It would be helpful if you have a list of trigger words that you can offer them if they are finding it difficult to think for themselves. The trigger words will differ, depending on the type of business the participant is considering but if you have a selection available, it will be helpful.

There is no need to share the outcomes of these individual brainstorming sessions as the results will be very personal. You could, however, ask the participants to share any other ideas for green businesses that have arisen as a result of the sessions. You should also make sure that the ideas are added to the list of business ideas each participant began at the end of Chapter 2.
EXERCISE 11 – STRUCTURAL BRAINSTORMING

This is an opportunity for group work. You should select small groups of 3 or 4 participants to work together, taking care in selecting the participants for each group to try and get a mix of people who will interact well together. By this time, you should know the group sufficiently well to identify the extroverts and introverts, those with ideas and those who will follow through and make things happen. Try to get a mixture of personalities in each group to ensure that as many ideas as possible are generated.

It is worthwhile taking some time over this exercise. Depending on the time available, you may like to set aside 90 minutes to two hours for this session to allow each group to brainstorm one environmental product from each member of the small group. So, at the end of the session, each group will have three or four products with lists of business ideas around each. This can be a rich source of innovative business ideas and should give each group member plenty of suggestions for their business idea. They should be given time to update the list of business ideas they began whilst studying chapter 2.

You may like to round off the exercise by asking each participant to share their favourite business idea from the session and ask if this is something they will take forward. You should note the ideas on a large sheet of paper and pin or stick this to the wall to allow all participants to see the ideas that have been generated.

EXERCISE 12 – USING LIFE-CYCLE ANALYSIS TO GENERATE BUSINESS IDEAS

Before beginning this exercise, participants should be directed to the Reading Material which is included in the appendices of the Training Manual. Appendix 7 is about life-cycle analysis and should be read before this exercise is attempted.

This is another exercise where groups of three or four participants can work together as this is an exercise that will benefit from a number of different perspectives. Depending on the time available, you should, perhaps allow an hour for this exercise with the groups being given the opportunity to consider the life cycle of more than one product. Clearly, unless you have technical specialists in the groups, it will be impossible for the participants to identify all the raw materials, all the resources and all the processes undergone by the materials to make the product but this is not the point of the exercise. The point is to try to identify areas where there may be a waste of resources or the
process could be inefficient which can provide opportunities for a green business to intervene and improve things.

Participants should be encouraged to think about all aspects of the life-cycle of the product, including what happens to it when it has reached the end of its use. Are there opportunities to repair the product or to strip it back to its component parts and find uses for these? These ideas will resonate with the discussions about the circular economy and recycling from earlier in the course and participants should be encouraged to think in this way. The idea is to find innovative ways of reducing the resource intensity of a product in a way which may present a business opportunity for your participants.

As with the structural brainstorming session, you can ask the groups to share their ideas in a plenary session at the end of the exercise and again, you should record the ideas for them to make a note of themselves. The participants should be encouraged to add any new ideas they have come up with from the group work or general discussions to the list of business ideas they began when considering chapter 2.

**EXERCISE 13 – SURVEY YOUR LOCAL AREA**

We anticipate that it will not be possible within the confines of this programme to allow participants to spend significant time on surveying their local area directly. It may be that your participants have travelled to be part of the programme so it would not be appropriate for them to go back to their own town to undertake a survey. If all the participants do come from a single town or city or from a couple of towns, you could do the exercise ‘virtually’ by asking participants to identify the businesses in the town or city from memory. The difficulty with this is that the survey will be incomplete and there may be potential opportunities that are not identified.

Perhaps the most appropriate method of dealing with this exercise is to indicate to the participants that this is something they should undertake as part of their research when they arrive back in their home town. In the meantime, you can use the case study material integrated into the programme to illustrate how to undertake the survey and the types of result that can be obtained.

This exercise can be used as a source of discussion with the participants about the benefits of undertaking a survey of this nature, what alternatives there may be and how the information may be used.
EXERCISE 14 – GATHER INFORMATION FROM YOUR ENVIRONMENT

This is another exercise that is impractical to undertake in the classroom setting and which participants should be directed to carry out when they arrive back in their home town. Again, you can use the case study material to stimulate discussion within the group about the type of information they are likely to find out and how this can be used.

Discussions around the exercise and the case study material may also help the participants to identify additional business opportunities that may interest them. They should be instructed to note these in the list of businesses they began early in the programme in chapter 2.

EXERCISE 15 – THIN BAMBOO

This exercise is a short set of questions generated by the case study reading on the experiences of the entrepreneur who established a bamboo industry in Sichuan Province. It can be used as an individual exercise, for small groups of participants to discuss the issues or as a more general discussion involving a whole group. The most effective use may be to use small groups to debate and discuss the responses before opening up to the plenary for a debate on the different ideas that each small group took from the reading. We suggest you allow the participants 10 to 15 minutes to read the material and respond to the questions before a further 10 minute discussion in plenary.

This is another opportunity for the participants in the programme to read about a real business opportunity. The case study also deals with a rural business but one which was very successful. The questions set can also provide a lead in to the market research and business analysis exercises in the following chapter, demonstrating why good research is vitally important to establishing a viable, long-term business.
Chapter 6 - Analyse your green business idea

CHAPTER 6
ANALYSE YOUR BUSINESS IDEAS

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 6

When you have finished studying chapter 6 of this Training Manual, you will:

- Be able to screen your business ideas to help you decide which is the best for you
- Know how to undertake field surveys and talk with important providers of information
- Be able to use a SWOT analysis to analyse your business ideas
- Undertake a basic environmental impact assessment of your business idea to make sure it is sustainable.

Chapter 6 of the training manual is about the participants analysing and evaluating their business ideas before carrying out further market research. In the early stages of studying chapter 6 of the training manual, the participants will have selected the business idea they most like from their lists and the further research will be carried out with this business idea in mind. You should help the participants in selecting the most appropriate business idea from the three they have researched in the previous section of the programme. You can achieve this by probing their ideas and their reasoning for them to make sure they have thought through all the implications of the business idea.

If the participants in the programme are to succeed with their business idea, they will need to be passionate about it and be committed to making it work. It is possible that, even after this intensive programme aimed at identifying their green business idea, they may not have found the correct business opportunity for them. If this is the case and they are less than committed to the idea they have identified, you should still encourage them to go through the process because when they have found the business they really can be passionate about, they will be aware of what they need to do to validate and research the idea to ensure it is viable. Having done it once on the programme, they will find it easier and quicker when they identify their real green business passion!

You may stress to the participants that just because they are passionate about their ideas and believe everyone else should be too, they have to be aware that for them to have a viable business, they have to make sure there are enough customers willing to buy their product or service. This part of the programme is, therefore, very important.
EXERCISES 16 & 17 – SCREENING YOUR BUSINESS IDEAS

At this stage, each participant in the programme will have a lengthy list of business ideas they have been gathering since the end of Chapter 2. It is now time to spend some time analysing and reviewing these ideas. These two exercises work together. The first is a series of questions, divided into four categories – customers; competitors; resources and requirements; and skills, knowledge and experience. Each business idea should be subject to these questions and the answers provided as detailed as possible. Areas where the participants are unable to answer will highlight areas of further research that will be necessary before the business can begin. If there are large areas of uncertainty in relation to some business ideas, it probably suggests they should not be considering these ideas further at this stage.

You may find that the participants are able to dismiss a number of their business ideas without going into any detail about them. This may be because they were just vague ideas they jotted down during the programme or because information they have heard since they had the idea has put them off. This is acceptable as it means there are fewer ideas to analyse in depth and if an idea is not appealing on review, it may not be the right one for that participant.

You should, however, encourage the participants to retain their list in their portfolio as they may need to come back to these early ideas at a later stage if the ideas that currently seem more favourable do not work out.

The subsequent exercise, 17, is the space where the participants can provide more information and discussion on their shorter list of potential business ideas, using the questions set in exercise 16.

You will need to be flexible on the amount of time you allow for these exercises. We suggest that at least an hour will be necessary for the participants to analyse more than a couple of their business ideas in detail and for you to provide support and guidance to them as they make their decisions. You should also encourage collaboration between the participants if they want to share their ideas. You may find that some are less willing to collaborate if they believe they have a really good business idea that may be appropriated by another participant. Others may be unwilling to collaborate if they think their ideas are weaker than others.

If the participants have not completed the exercises during the programme, you should
encourage them to continue this work when they get back home to make sure they are not ruling out a potentially good business opportunity or that they are not just making do with an idea that seems acceptable because they did not have time or energy to complete the exercise.

You should now ask the participants to go through their list of explanations and answers to the questions and identify the two or three ideas they like the best and which they feel would be good business ideas to pursue. There is space on the form used for Exercise 17 for them to place a tick or cross, or other form of highlight against the opportunities they like or dislike at this stage. You can remind the participants that whatever idea they select, they will need to live with it for a considerable period of time as they continue their research and develop their business. They will then need to retain their enthusiasm for the business as they establish it and make it successful. They do, therefore, need to be committed to it!

The participants should list the three ideas they are most keen to explore further and to develop into a real business idea.

EXERCISE 18 – KEY INFORMATION PROVIDERS

Unlike some of the other survey exercises, this one can be undertaken in the classroom situation. The participants may not be able to complete it during the sessions but they should be able to identify at least two or three key information providers who they would like to approach and the information they would like to get from them. Some of the participants may be nervous about approaching people in authority for information and they may find that it is difficult to get access to some of the people. However, you should make it clear that if they have a clear purpose and message for the person they wish to speak with and they can get past the ‘gatekeepers’ such as secretaries, advisors and assistants they will generally find the effort to have been worthwhile. If the participants are serious about starting their green business and have a coherent business case and specific issues where they would like the person’s help, they are likely to be given some time.

You should encourage the participants to think hard about the people in their area (geographically and in their chosen business sector) who can help them. You should be prepared to prompt them to think of people if they find it difficult. There are some
suggestions in the training manual but your experience with training other groups will help you to identify other potential key information providers.

You should also reinforce to the participants that they will be very lucky if they can get to see all of the key information providers they have identified. They should, therefore, identify more than they need, to make sure they get access to at least some of them. If there are key information providers who a participant has identified as absolutely critical to his or her business idea, they will need to be persistent in trying to set a meeting but be careful not to cause the information provider inconvenience.

You will need to be flexible with the amount of time devoted to this exercise but we suggest probably no more than 45 minutes in total is devoted to this, including some feedback from participants on the people they wish to meet and the information they hope to obtain. Discussing the ideas in plenary may help other participants to identify key information providers they had not thought of up to that point.

You should also encourage the participants to continue thinking about this after the programme is ended. When they get back to their locality and they are working on their business plan, they may identify other people they would need to speak with and additional information they would like to obtain.

**EXERCISE 19 – ROLE PLAYING INTERVIEW WITH A KEY INFORMATION PROVIDER**

It could be a useful exercise at this stage to include a short role-play exercise where you select two members of the group to act out a scenario. In this case, one would play the role of a new green entrepreneur (and it may be helpful to identify a participant whose business idea is quite well developed for this role) and the other would act out the role of one of the key information providers from whom the aspiring entrepreneur wants to elicit information. You will need to brief the key information provider well in his or her role and ensure he or she is aware of the types of response that may be useful. The exercise should not be made too easy for the would-be entrepreneur as, in real life, information is rarely handed out to people who do not work for it. You could, for example, instruct the participant playing the key information provider to be difficult in the interview and to ask for help or support back from the entrepreneur in return for the information he requires.
The entrepreneur should be allowed to prepare him or herself for the interview as they are familiar with their business idea but you may wish to have some information and guidance already prepared for the information provider. We suggest that the ‘actors’ should be given 5 to 10 minutes to prepare for the activity and that the ‘interview’ should take no longer than 10 minutes.

It is important, once the ‘interview’ is over, that you ask the ‘actors’ for their feedback on the exercise and to advise the group what they have learned. You should also seek feedback from the rest of the participants to find out what they have learned from the role play and if this has altered their ideas about how they would approach an interview with a key information provider.

If you have the time, you could get more than one pair of ‘actors’ to prepare and undertake role play interviews. This will provide more comprehensive help to all the participants.

EXERCISE 20 – FIELD SURVEY

This exercise is one that the participants will need to undertake after the end of the programme as it involves making contact with and meeting people in the participant’s own area who can help them with their research into their business idea. You could, again, use the case study information provided in the chapter to inform a discussion about this exercise.

EXERCISE 21 – SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis is a useful business tool and the background to using SWOT analysis is provided earlier in this training manual in the section entitled, ‘Introduction to tools for learning and business’. The SWOT analysis for individual businesses can be undertaken at this point and if so, each participant will need to work alone on the SWOT analysis for their own business opportunity. However, you may find it more informative to the participants to do a group exercise and undertake a SWOT analysis for either one idea that has arisen from the group (if several participants are considering a similar business, this may be helpful) or you could use the case study information to develop an exercise around the business ideas of Ms C. This would provide you with a comparison between
the ideas put forward by the participants and the ideas developed for the case study material. If taking this latter course of action, you will need to make sure the participants are fully conversant with the case study material and are aware of the background and research that Ms C has undertaken up to this point.

The outcome of this exercise is that the participants will be aware of the use of SWOT analysis and will be able to use the technique to analyse their own business ideas after the end of the programme. This is probably best done when much of the real research has been undertaken into their business ideas and you should give them some guidance about timing.

EXERCISE 22 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To enable the participants to undertake this exercise effectively in relation to their own business idea, they would need to have a very clear idea about the business, where it is likely to be situated, the supply of raw materials and the processes they would employ in achieving their business aims. They would also need to understand the issues of transport and distribution of their products or services. Unless the business idea is very simple and the participants have developed a very clear understanding of their business idea, it is probably not practical to undertake the EIA of their own ideas.

Accordingly, you can follow the guidance from the previous exercise and either select one business idea from the group or use the case study material to inform the discussions. The danger in working on an idea from the group is that you enable one participant (or a group if there are others pursuing a similar business idea) to gain an advantage over his or her colleagues by helping them with this part of the business planning process. Whilst this is not a competition, other participants may feel aggrieved if one person is seen to be given an advantage. Using the case study material may, therefore, be a better course of action.

A third alternative is that you provide different case study material relating to a business with which you are familiar and you use this scenario to develop the EIA. This will necessitate additional preparation on your part in developing appropriate case study information that will allow this to be a good learning exercise.

When you have completed the exercise with the group, it will be interesting to compare their results against the case study material provided to support the programme.
CHAPTER 7
YOUR OWN BUSINESS IDEAS

Learning Outcomes for Chapter 7

When you have finished studying chapter 6 of this Training Manual, you will:

- Have a clearer idea of your green business opportunity
- Understand what your next steps will be.

The final chapter, chapter 7 of the training manual is about the participants completing their work and you providing a summary of the programme before they leave to pursue their green business ideas. The exercises here are not intended to provide the participants with new ideas or things to do but to summarise and consolidate the information they have gathered over their period on the programme and to plan their next steps. It is important to make sure that the participants leave with a positive message – that their business ideas are good ones and that they have the ability to pursue them and be successful. China and the rest of the world needs bright, energetic and enthusiastic people to develop new green businesses and the participants in this programme can be at the forefront of the low carbon economy which will enable us to limit the effects of climate change and the other major environmental issues that face us.

EXERCISE 23 – SUMMARISE YOUR GREEN BUSINESS IDEAS

This exercise is exactly as it is described. This is the opportunity for the participants to pull together all the work they have done on the programme and put together a coherent summary of what their green business idea is and what it is intended to achieve. This is a personal exercise that the participants should be allowed to complete on their own. You should provide additional input and support as required but if the participants have followed the programme effectively, they should be clear by now on what their business will be.

If there are participants who are still not sure about their business idea, you should encourage them to complete this exercise in relation to the business idea they currently like ‘best’ from the whole group of ideas they have had during the programme. You
should then advise that, after the programme is complete, they can go back to the early part of the programme and repeat some of the exercises, perhaps using family members, friends or colleagues to help stimulate ideas.

There may also be participants who have decided, as a result of the programme that they are not yet ready to become green entrepreneurs. Again, these participants should be encouraged to complete the exercise for the ‘best’ idea they have had but then to focus on the next and final exercise of the programme.

**EXERCISE 24 – GENERATE YOUR ACTION PLAN**

To enable the participants to leave in a positive frame of mind but also to ensure they are aware this programme has not answered all the questions about starting their new green business, they should all complete an action plan for the forthcoming weeks and months. This will be a living document and the participants should be encouraged to keep the document in their portfolio and update it as appropriate. The action plan will differ, depending on how advanced the business ideas are as a result of the programme.

The participants who are not yet ready to begin their business will need to identify the additional skills, resources and experience they require to enable them to move towards becoming a green entrepreneur. This will repeat and consolidate work they have done already in exercises 6, 7 and 8 but since completing these exercises, they may have identified other areas where they need to develop their knowledge and experience.

For those who are ready to start a business but have not yet finalised their business idea, it will be important for them to identify what additional research they need to undertake to arrive at a clear and firm idea for their business.

Whatever stage of development the participants have reached, it is important that they put some dates into their action plan. This will help them begin to develop project management skills as they realise that certain actions are dependent on others and that tasks generally take longer to complete than you anticipate when you are planning them.

We hope the majority of participants will be able to leave the programme with a clear idea of what they want to achieve and can put together a coherent and robust action plan for the forthcoming period as they develop their ideas and begin their new, green business.
Before saying goodbye to the participants, it is important that you provide them with information about where they can obtain additional information, any additional support they can gain access to as they develop their business and further learning opportunities that are available to them. This can be in the form of a handout for them to include in their portfolio or you can provide them with the information verbally and allow them to note it down.

It is also worthwhile encouraging the participants to stay in touch with you (if you have the capacity to provide additional help) and especially with their colleagues from the programme. The point was made earlier that their colleagues from the programme can be the start of their professional network. Starting a new business can be a lonely experience and it is important that those going through the process have some means of help and support. Those experiencing similar things can often be a source of support and inspiration and can help the new entrepreneurs to overcome some of the hurdles they will encounter as they develop and implement their new business.

The end of any programme of training is often emotional, particularly if you have been together for some time. You will have taken the participants on the programme through a journey of self-discovery and learning. Most trainers also find that they learn things from the participants and from the way they respond to the different exercises. We hope you have enjoyed the experience and that the evaluation you receive from the participants is positive. Do not forget to get them to complete the evaluation material before they leave.